

grinned his grizzled yellow
teeth and
me sitting froze-like and
white knuckled and
feeling sick
"these ole' innernationals 'ere do
awright straight out, eh?"

captain america incognito

at first i thought he looked like
captain america not because he
was big and bold and beautiful with
a dazzling uniform to match but
ironic-like in his u.s. air force
blue jacket with one lonely stripe and
a set of bulky ear phones hanging about
his neck and scrubby unshaven face
(he looked lean and hungry) and
spectacles with snap on shades and
one of those skinny western neckties
with a turquoise indian clasp and
as he prodded about the patio chairs
he asked to see a chaise rocker and
continued prodding with this strange
looking extendable aluminum cane that
i just wouldn't trust (thinking of a
hidden collapsable sword) and he fiddled
with an old am-fm-short-band (his fingers
moved rapidly in quick nervous jerks)
radio that hung over his neck down to
his hip and had what looked like
a microphone attached so i wondered
if he was tape recording too as
i showed him the two rockers we sold
and he kicked at them with his penny
loafers to make them rock while pointing
out with his cane that wooden rockers
are better and last longer than aluminum
and i began to feel uncomfortable and
so left him standing there and soon
got busy and never noticed him leave.

alpha beta peach

i ate it again
each time the
last one lingering
always picking the
softest and giving
it a deep sniff and

firm rub between my
hands before biting
into its sweet flesh
and enjoying the
fuzzy skin too and
sucking the stone
until only sticky
fingers remained so
i'd toss it into
the alpha beta
grocery bag that
i used for trash
and go and rinse
my fingers off.

-- leo mailman

Long Beach, CA

sometimes
a man must be
in one place
long enough
to plant himself in
to take root and
grow
and know
where he is

San Francisco From a Cable Car

on
the san francisco cable cars
i sat next to
a man and a woman
who pressed
their mouths together to keep
each other from
the san francisco night

while
in the corner of the car
a girl stood with the dark staring
out of herself
and for a moment our eyes
met and i thought
maybe she was looking for
san francisco too

but
just then this guy
walks right up
to her and puts his arm around